

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A tomographic image processing method for carrying out image processing on image data representing a chest tomographic image, the method comprising the step of:

carrying out dynamic range compression processing on the image data so as to compress a high density range of the chest tomographic image,

wherein the chest tomographic image includes a low density range that is unaffected by the compression of the high density range.

2. (original): A tomographic image processing method as defined in Claim 1, the method further comprising the step of:

carrying out frequency enhancing processing on the image data having been subjected to the dynamic range compression processing.

3. (currently amended) A tomographic image processing apparatus for carrying out image processing on image data representing a chest tomographic image, the apparatus comprising:

dynamic range compression processing means for carrying out dynamic range compression processing on the image data in order to compress a high density range of the chest tomographic image,

wherein the chest tomographic image includes a low density range that is unaffected by the compression of the high density range.

4. (original): A tomographic image processing apparatus as defined in Claim 3, further comprising:

frequency enhancing processing means for carrying out frequency enhancing processing on the image data that have been subjected to the dynamic range compression processing.

5. (currently amended): A computer-readable recording medium storing a program to cause a computer to execute a tomographic image processing method for carrying out image processing on image data representing a chest tomographic image, the program comprising the procedure of:

carrying out dynamic range compression processing on the image data so as to compress a high density range of the chest tomographic image,

wherein the chest tomographic image includes a low density range that is unaffected by the compression of the high density range.

6. (original): A computer-readable recording medium as defined in Claim 5, the program further comprising the procedure of:

carrying out frequency enhancing processing on the image data having been subjected to the dynamic range compression processing.

7. (previously presented): The tomographic image processing method as defined in claim 2, wherein the frequency enhancing processing is multiple frequency enhancing processing.

8. (previously presented): The tomographic image processing apparatus as defined in claim 4, wherein the frequency enhancing processing is multiple frequency enhancing processing.

9. (previously presented): The computer-readable recording medium as defined in claim 6, wherein the frequency enhancing processing is multiple frequency enhancing processing.